

## Sample Newsletter 1

### **Influenza Is Serious and Preventable**

Every year in the United States, approximately 200,000 people are hospitalized and more than 36,000 people die from influenza.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup> In fact, influenza and pneumonia - vaccine-preventable diseases - are the eighth leading cause of death in the United States.<sup>26</sup>

### **Health Care Personnel (HCP) Have a Special Obligation**

As HCP, we have a responsibility to protect our patients by making sure we are immunized against influenza each year. Many of us come in contact with patients who are at high risk for influenza-related complications, including some children, adults over the age of 65, and patients with chronic illnesses. For this reason, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend annual influenza immunization for all HCP.

HCP can be a key cause of influenza outbreaks in institutional settings. Unfortunately, only 42 percent of HCP with direct patient contact choose to be immunized against influenza each year, putting their patients at risk (CDC, unpublished data, 2006).<sup>1</sup>

### **Free Influenza Vaccinations Will Be Available Here Soon**

This year [ORGANIZATION'S] goal is to immunize [INSERT GOAL, I.E., 90 PERCENT] of employees against influenza. Vaccination will be offered free of charge to all employees starting in October. To encourage participation, we will [INSERT DETAILS ABOUT INCENTIVES, DEPARTMENT COMPETITION, ETC. HERE].

### **Influenza Immunization Has a Decades-Long Record of Safety**

Influenza immunization is safe and effective and has been available for many decades. Contrary to popular myth, influenza vaccine will not give you the flu. The flu shot, an inactivated vaccine containing killed virus (also known as TIV for trivalent, inactivated flu vaccine) is made from dead viruses and cannot give you the flu.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup> The nasal-spray flu vaccine, a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses (sometimes called LAIV for live, attenuated influenza vaccine) does not cause the flu either. Attenuated means the viruses are weakened and will not cause severe symptoms often associated with influenza illness. LAIV is cold-adapted and temperature-sensitive, meaning the viruses can grow in the nose and throat, but not in the lower respiratory tract where the temperature is higher.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup> Some people experience a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. This soreness goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup> To learn more about influenza and the safety of vaccination, visit [CONTACT NAME] in the [DEPARTMENT NAME, I.E., OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH OR INFECTION CONTROL].

Protect your patients and protect yourself against influenza this year. Get immunized!

[Sidebar]

#### Influenza Facts:

- ☆ Influenza and pneumonia are the eighth leading cause of death among U.S. adults. Each year in the United States, 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu; more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications; and approximately 36,000 people die from influenza.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup>
- ☆ Influenza is a highly contagious disease that is spread by coughing, sneezing, direct physical contact with people infected with the flu, and contact with objects that carry the virus (e.g., doorknobs, phones, etc.).<sup>1, 15, 25</sup>
- ☆ Symptoms of influenza include fever, extreme fatigue, headache and body aches.
- ☆ Approximately 50 percent of infected people have no symptoms but are still contagious.<sup>15</sup>

#### Influenza Vaccine:

- ☆ The flu shot is 70–90% effective in preventing influenza in healthy people under the age of 65.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup>
- ☆ The flu vaccine cannot give you the flu. The flu shot, an inactivated vaccine containing killed virus (also known as TIV for trivalent, inactivated flu vaccine) is made from dead viruses and cannot give you the flu. The nasal-spray flu vaccine, a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses (sometimes called LAIV for live, attenuated influenza vaccine) does not cause the flu either. Some people experience a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. This soreness goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.<sup>1, 15, 25</sup>

